

A

(2)

# SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE

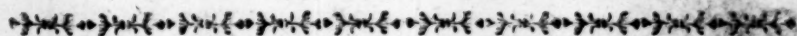
LIFE and DEATH

OF

Miss *ALICE GILBERT*,

Who died, AUGUST the 27th, 1772.

In the NINETEENTH Year of her Age.



LONDON: Printed by R. HAWES,  
And Sold at the Foundry in *Moorfields*; and at the  
Rev. Mr. *Wesley's* Preaching-Houses, in  
Town and Country. 1776.





A

SHORT ACCOUNT, &c.

ISS ALICE GILBERT, was the second daughter of *Nathanael Gilbert*, Esq; and *Elizabeth* his Wife, of the island of *Antigua*. She was born there Nov. 15th. 1753. Her parents (who are still living) instructed her early in the ways of God. And what they did was not altogether in vain; for she appeared, from time to time, to have many serious impressions, more especially after the death of her elder sister, who fell asleep in Jesus, Jan. 21st. 1768. But though this concern by little and little wore off, yet she still retained a decent external deportment.

About two years ago, partly by the sudden death of a Negro Woman in the family, and partly by some very pious letters she received from her Mamma, her concern revived. She then began in good earnest to seek the Lord afresh; and after she had been thus engaged a few months,

she found him whom her soul longed for : But instead of going on chearfully, as might be expected, she enjoyed but little of the comforts of religion ; for being frequently exercised with sore temptations, her evidences were much clouded.

She was in this state, when the Measles (in *February* last) appeared upon her, which terminated in a Consumption. During all her illness, she seemed to be greatly harrassed by the enemy ; and tho' there were little or no hopes of her recovery, yet she could never bear to hear of death, and always expressed a strong desire to live. Notwithstanding she was so exercised in her spirit, and so feeble in body, that she could not rise from her knees without help, nor stand alone, she made conscience of prayer, at stated times : This practise she continued, 'till it was judged quite improper, under her great weakness. Nor was she less punctual in reading the scriptures, in which she often found a blessing to her soul : But the last chapter of *St. John's* gospel, the 2d. of the *Acts*, and the 21st. of the *Revelation*, were most particularly affecting to her.

The day she took to her bed, the Lord broke in upon her, and released her from the power of the enemy. When her soul was thus set at liberty, she longed as earnestly



neftly to die, as ſhe had before deſired to live. This eagerneſs after life was in part owing to a long ſeparation from her parents, and a fond expectation of ſeeing them once more, eſpecially as the phyſicians had recommended her native air to her.

Before her diſorder came to any great height, her underſtanding, memory, and hearing were very much impaired; but about ten days before her death, her hearing grew better, and her underſtanding and memory ſeemed perfectly reſtored, and continued ſo till ſhe died.

Monday, *Auguſt* 17th, being the day ſhe was firſt confined to her bed, her aunt G—t went into the chamber, juſt as Mr. G—t had concluded prayer with her. When he withdrew, Mrs. G—t asked her if ſhe had been bleſſed in that means. She replied, “Not particularly, at that time;” but ſaid that ſhe had ſeveral times that “day been reſreſhed with the love of “God: and that once ſhe had ſuch a fight “of heaven, as made her long to be there.” Upon her aunt’s obſerving that it would be a great advantage to be there, ſhe answered, “Yes; and ſaid, I ſome-times even long “to die, becauſe I am ſure of being happy.”

In the miſt of theſe comforts, a deſire to ſee her parents would often intrude; but,

she said, "If I should see them no more here, I am persuaded we shall soon meet in heaven." Her aunt added,—Yes, my dear, and never to part again. Upon this, she sweetly smiled, as if pleased with the glorious expectation. After a little more conversation, her aunt told her that the physician approved of the *Breast Milk*, which, at our request, she had been taking for some days past. She seemed uneasy upon hearing this, and said she feared a disappointment. Being asked in what? She replied, "I have been longing and expecting to die, and the Doctor has hopes from the Milk."

She also spoke much of *seeing* Jesus as he is; and wished to triumph greatly in her last moments, that she might glorify God, and edify those about her.

Tuesday, 18. Her aunt arose before five, and going to sit with her, found her in the same happy frame. She commended a very excellent funeral Hymn, and wished she could sing it. Her aunt said, my dear, you will, e're long, sing the song of *Moses* and the Lamb. She replied, "Yes:" And upon being asked, if the expectation did not fill her with comfort? She said it did; and several times afterwards expressed a fear of being restored to health again.

Towards

Towards evening, she was restless, and said that the enemy was very busy, and that she was afraid of yielding to temptation. She had lately read the account of *Margaret Colley*, and spoke much of it, wishing to make such an end. She desired her sister *Nancy* to read the hymn annexed to that account; then read it herself, and begged her friends to let it be sung when they saw her dying, and likewise over her coffin. She seemed greatly pleased with the thoughts of seeing her friends again in eternity; and spoke of the frequent dreams she had of her sister *Polly*.

Wednesday, 19th, early in the morning, she sent for her aunt G—t, and desired her to stay with her that she might see her die; and expressed a desire that it might be that day. She said, “ I do not want so much  
 “ to be released from pain, as to be with  
 “ Jesus;—Oh happy, happy, happy day!  
 “ —I shall get the start of you all; but  
 “ you will follow.” She then called a christian friend, whose mother is unawakened, and said, “ Pray give my love to  
 “ your mother, and tell her there is no  
 “ happiness but in religion. Tell her also  
 “ that I hope to see her in heaven.”

She then wished to see her own brothers; and immediately a messenger was dispatched for them. But as they were at some distance,

distance; and could not come so soon as was desired, she said, "I must give them up to God: and I am glad now that I did not see my mamma, for that would have been a tye to life."

When her uncle said to her, My dear, you now see the necessity of all our past care for you, of our cautions and exhortations. She answered, Yes; and then thanked him for the tender concern he had always shewn for her temporal and eternal welfare. Soon after, she asked for the apothecary, and said she should be glad to know if he thought she would die that day. When she saw him, she proposed the question; adding, "Don't flatter me; for I am not afraid to die:" And when she understood he did not think she could abide many hours, she seemed pleased.

Some time after he was gone, she asked her aunt, if she thought she could continue long? Her aunt said, My dear, the apothecary was of opinion that you would not survive many hours.—"Hours!" replied she, with seeming dissatisfaction. You want me, said her aunt, to talk of moments: She answered, Yes; and prayed much that the Lord would not delay to take her to himself. She then said, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Oh! Why so long?" When she felt very severe  
pain



pain, she said, "I do not mind it: I shall soon have done with pain." But tho' she thus triumphed, yet she would often complain of being assaulted by the enemy, and begged all of us to pray that he might be subdued. After lying still some time, she would say, "I thought I was just gone:" and seemed pleased with it. So when she perceived her breath grow short, she rejoiced, looking upon it as a token of her approaching release. She desired, that when we saw her close her eyes, we would praise God; for then she should be gone to glory.

About four in the afternoon, she laid quite still, and to all appearance just gone; but when she revived, she expressed great disappointment, and said, "Did not my friends prayers still detain me here, I should have been now in paradise." She then desired to know if her nails were black, or if there was any other symptom of her speedy dissolution, which she exceedingly longed for.

About six in the evening, she poured out her soul in fervent prayer, and intreated the Lord to rend the veil, and to let her see Jesus as he is; saying, "Come Lord, this night! and admit me to the heavenly banquet. Lord! enable me to say, Thy will

“ will be done.” After this, she was quite composed, and said, “ By the grace of  
 “ God I will not be impatient, tho’ he  
 “ keeps me till to-morrow, or even longer.”  
 She then laid for a few minutes as if in a  
 doze, and said, “ They shall hear the  
 “ voice of the Son of God, and all that  
 “ hear shall live.” When she awoke, she  
 smiling said, “ There is Mrs. *Walsh*, too ;  
 “ I shall see her in heaven.”

About nine o’clock, her brothers came home. When they came into the room, she saw them without emotion, and embraced them affectionately. She also desired they might be permitted to stay alone with her. Accordingly all withdrew ; but her aunt G—t as she was going out of the room, hearing her exert her feeble voice, silently went in again, and stood behind the curtain. Her conversation with her brothers was so pious, affectionate, and interesting, that her aunt said, she would not have been absent upon any account.  
 “ My dears, (said she) you know I was  
 “ once as healthy and lively as you are  
 “ now, and you see to what a state of weak-  
 “ nefs I am reduced.” She then related the progress of her decline, and said, “ Is  
 “ it not a blessing, to be prepared for  
 “ such a state, and to be resigned to death ?  
 “ —Yea, to be almost impatient for the  
 joyful

“ joyful moment?—The Lord may thus  
 “ lay his hand upon *You*. Oh! Prepare  
 “ for death:—Pray much for me and your-  
 “ selves.—Ought we not also to praise God  
 “ for the religious education we have had?  
 “.—Oh! We have many mercies to be  
 “ thankful for.” She told them she had  
 sent a message to her cousin: “ For, said  
 “ she, the words of a dying person may  
 “ have great effect upon her: And I hope  
 “ you also will remember what you see and  
 “ hear from me.” She then ordered one  
 of her sisters to give them a piece of pre-  
 served *Ginger*, and tenderly embracing  
 them she said,—“ Well, now go to bed,  
 “ and be sure *pray* much.” She after-  
 wards sweetly composed herself to rest.

Her message to her cousin was as follows.  
 “ Tell her I was once in as good health, as  
 “ she can possibly be; yet the Lord has  
 “ brought me down to the grave.—Tell  
 “ her to devote herself to God, and pre-  
 “ pare to meet me in heaven; to leave off  
 “ dress, and to remember these words  
 “ come from one dying, and yet not afraid  
 “ to die.”

Thursday, 20th. Her aunt *G—t* arose,  
 between four and five, much affected and  
 weighed down in her spirit, and going to  
 her bed-side and seeing her dying looks,  
 could not refrain from weeping greatly,  
 which

which she perceiving, said, "Why do you  
 " grieve? O praise God! praise God! For I  
 " am going to happiness!" After this, she  
 got one of her sisters to reach her several little  
 trifles which she bequeathed to friends to  
 keep for her sake. How easily, said her aunt,  
 do you part with these things, who know  
 that you have a treasure in heaven, and are  
 rich towards God! "Yes," said she. She  
 then spoke a word of exhortation to all her  
 sisters; and having called *Fanny Lyons*,  
 she gave her much christian advice, as a  
 godly parent would counsel a child. I was  
 at that time absent, but coming to her  
 again, she said, "I have been speaking to  
 " *Fanny*, and I beg you will give her some  
 " of that money of mine, which you have  
 " in your hands; and give her not a little,  
 " for it is the last I can give her: She has  
 " no friends, and therefore I thought to  
 " be a friend to her." This she repeated  
 again, saying, "I intended to have been  
 " a friend to her." This circumstance  
 is mentioned, to shew the benevolence of  
 her tender, loving heart.

She then called for the cook-maid, and  
 for a little girl; one of them she reproved  
 for her great lightness, and warned her of  
 the danger of giving way to it. The other  
 she exhorted to do her duty faithfully, and  
 said, "Much prayer will enable you to do  
 " all Things well.

To



To one that had attended occasionally, she said, " You must come among the *Methodists*, and never leave them: Not that being a *Methodist* will save you; but because they are a people that live up to their profession, and adorn the doctrine of Christ. You must not let your friends laugh you out of religion, as they have done your brother. I hope to meet you in heaven; but take care to instruct your child, that he too may meet you there. You see I am not afraid to die; but am quite resign'd to the will of God, expecting my dissolution.— You ought to pay the more regard to the words I have spoken, as coming from a *dying* person, who can have no other view in speaking, but the good of your soul."

Indeed her whole behaviour, in the prospect of her approaching change, has been extraordinary. Her ardent desires to benefit others in her latest moments, made her forget her bodily sufferings, and caused her to spend herself far beyond what her feeble frame was able to support. " My work, said she, is done!—I have nothing to do but to die!" She then enquired, if we saw the symptoms of death increase upon her, which she rejoiced to hear of. " I love every body, said she, and if I have  
C offended

“offended any one, I hope they will forgive me.—I have remembered in my prayers all whom I know.” She also sent her duty and love to her aunt B—y. “Tell her, said she, I die happy.”

In the evening, about eight o’clock, she had a strong spasm in her jaw; and looking at her aunt, she calmly asked, what she thought of it. Her aunt replied, My dear, it is a token that the Lord is going to fulfil your desire, in taking you to himself: She was very attentive and seemed pleased. Her aunt G. observing to her, that she seemed to make no more of *dying* than of going to sleep; she answered, “Just the same.” And when her aunt further said, You want to leave us; she chearfully made answer, “I should like to take you with me, as I should have been when I expected to go to *Antigua*.” To her aunt G—t she said, “You have been a good aunt to me, and so has my aunt G—e. I wish you would both stay with me as much as you can; for I love to have you with me.”

Friday, 21st. Her aunt G—t was called up at half past four o’clock; when she found her calmly waiting the good pleasure of the Lord; but so earnest with her longings to depart, that she sometimes feared she gave way to impatience.

To

To a Minister, who asked her, if she feared death, she said, "No." Why, said he, Is not death an awful thing? How comes it, that you do not fear it? She replied, "Because I have an interest in "Christ." Do you want, said he, to get rid of your sufferings? "No, said she, I "want to see the Lord and to be with "him." Is HIS love so abundantly shed abroad in your heart, that you long to be dissolved? She replied, "Yes." In a word: So strong was her confidence, and so compleat was her victory over the king of terrors, that she amazed all who visited her.

Saturday, 22d. After a suffering and patient night, she was in the morning composed, and waiting for the Lord. Several times this day, she was tempted to great impatience to be gone, which she strove against; and after any impressions of any kind, she would ask if she had spoke amiss. Just as she awoke out of a doze, she asked her aunt, if she did not hear her say, "*It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body?*" Her aunt answered No.—"Then, said she, I repeated it in my "sleep."

Sunday, 23. She got some repose; and there appeared great signs of her growing better. In this transient change she began

to be quite resigned to life, tho' she still preferred death. She always had something profitable to say to those who came to see her: And it is to be hoped, her words will make a lasting impression upon the minds of many.

Monday, 24th. She appeared free from the Fever, but very weak; and in the morning she was in a patient, quiet frame of soul, laying as clay in the hands of the potter. About noon, she broke out into very fervent prayer, and wrestled with God for some hours, without intermission, for the entire accomplishment of his work in her soul.—“ O! said she to her aunt, “ pray that I may be filled with all the “ fullness of God.” Then, as if no one was near, she lifted up her eyes to heaven, and cried mightily to the God of her salvation. “ O my God! hear my prayer, and “ let my feeble cry come up before thee. “ O come and bring an everlasting righteousness into my soul! O bless me now, “ as thou hast never done before!”

As it drew towards evening, she intreated the Lord to make the approaching night, a night much to be remembered. “ More of thy presence, Lord! said she. “ O come! and take full possession of my “ heart, &c.” She was enabled at this time to plead the promises of God with great



great earnestness.—“ Lord, said she, *Thou hast not said to any of the seed of Jacob, seek ye my face, in vain !* Thou hast bid me ask, that I may receive, that my joy may be full : and thou hast promised to do *more for me, than I can ask or think.* —O ! enlarge my heart, and fill me with thy love, and take me to thy dear embrace.” She then prayed fervently, and very solemnly in these words of an Hymn,

“ Come, O my God, thyself reveal,  
 “ Fill all this mighty void ;  
 “ Thou only can’st my spirit fill ;  
 “ Come, O my God, my God ! ”

After this, she laid still and composed, but appeared very weak in body, and we apprehended would not continue long.

Tuesday, 25th. She was still in a longing frame of soul, and prayed very excellently. “ O ! said she, Why do his chariot-wheels so long delay !—O that I had the wings of a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest ! ” She told her aunt, she had given up all to God, “ My body, soul and spirit, *all* that I have and *am.* ” About noon, she was greatly convulsed in her head and face, but perfectly sensible, and said, “ This may not be death, for you know I was so some nights ago.” When her

her sisters were gone to dinner, she said, " 'Ere long, I shall sit down with the holy prophets and apostles in my heavenly Father's kingdom." She looked at her aunt, and smiling, said, " I hope to-morrow I shall be shut up in this room by myself," (meaning her coffin.) At another time she said, " When you see the breath leave my body, you must all shout for joy."

Notwithstanding her evidence was thus clear, and her soul so triumphed in God her Saviour, yet she was frequently assaulted by the enemy of souls, who sometimes accused her of hypocrisy, and wanting to make herself of some consequence and importance. In the evening, she said, " I believe it is an hard thing to die ; but I am willing to venture it." She was very much convulsed at night, but yet sensible. She desired me to put my hand upon her heart, which I did, and felt it flutter and beat surprizingly ; being as I supposed convulsed. All this she attended to, with a seeming pleasure, and the nearer death approached, the more welcome he was. O ! what cannot our Jesus do for those whose trust is in him !

Wednesday, 26th, She laid very still great part of the day, and dozed much ; but it was easy to perceive her dissolution drawing

drawing near. She begged her friends to pray that she might be patient till the coming of the Lord: She also prayed fervently herself, and desired the following verse of an hymn to be repeated.

Salem ope's it pearly gates,  
Where the Mediator waits;  
Waits to clasp them to his heart,  
Waits a kingdom to impart.

"The *Mediator*, said she, is Christ." And oh! how did she look up, as if she had indeed a view of her Lord. "Where the Mediator waits—I believe (said she) I shall think of those words, when I am entering into glory."

At night, she thus addressed all of us who were present, "When you see me dead, I charge you to kneel down and praise God.—Let all the family be called together to praise GOD; I charge you! I charge you!" Indeed she had such a victory over the king of terrors, that she conversed as familiarly about him, as we do about the common concerns of life.

Thursday, 27th. She expressed many passionate longings to be at her heavenly Father's house. When one felt her pulse, she asked, "What think you?" The person replied,—they seem very feeble. She said, "That is well: By the grace of God I will not be impatient. Cannot you  
sing,

“sing, (said she?)” What hymn, we asked, would you have us sing? She answered, “I do not know, but let it be “about glory:” and soon after, she lifted up her own feeble voice, in these words of a funeral hymn.\*

“Away with our sorrows and fear,  
“We soon shall recover our home.”

All present joined in it, and sung it to the end; she herself giving out the first line of almost every verse. It was like Dr. Young’s fine description of the chamber where the *good Man* meets his fate: It seemed indeed just on the verge of heaven. She told her aunt, that the sight of her shroud and coffin would *greatly delight her*. She then prayed fervently, and passionately longed for *His appearing*: “Lord, said she, “Come, and turn my prayers into endless “songs of praise!—O blessed Jesus!—O “sweet Jesus! Come and set the captive “free!” The adorable name of *Jesus*, seemed sweet indeed to her, and she cried out in transport, “*He is mine! He is mine!* “—I taste that he is gracious.” Sometimes she would say, “Lord, let this be “the happy night, when thou wilt take “me to thyself, and make me one with “thee, as thou and thy Father are one! “O Lord Jesus, give me a complete vic- “tory over *Satan, Sin, and Death!*—Thou  
“wilt!

\* See the *Eighth* of Mr. Wesley’s Funeral Hymns.



**ef**

“ wilt! Thou wilt! - O Lord!” She then said, “ Lord, pardon me, if I have asked  
 “ any thing amiss! Thou canst have com-  
 “ passion, thou knowest I am but dust. O  
 “ forgive what is wrong in my prayers and  
 “ desires, and pardon whatever else thou  
 “ seest amiss in me. I am a young, igno-  
 “ rant creature, and know not how to pray  
 “ aright.” Many other such gracious  
 words did she utter in her prayers, which  
 she continued incessantly for the space of  
 two or three hours.

She was now very weak, and had great  
 difficulty in bringing up the phlegm; and  
 about half past nine at night, she was almost  
 choked with it. Perceiving her sinking and  
 growing cold, her aunt G—t said, My  
 dear, the Lord is now going to answer your  
 desires. Are you glad to find the period  
 nigh? She said, “ Yes.” Her aunt then  
 repeated her favourite verse,

*Salem ope's its pearly gates, &c.*

and she was pleased with it. She then had a  
 great struggle, but was relieved as soon as  
 her uncle began to pray.—Her last words  
 were directed to him; which were, “ Pray!  
 Pray!” Upon which, he kneeled down  
 again; and about the time that he was say-  
 ing, ‘ *Lift up your heads, ye everlasting*  
 ‘ *gates, and let the heir of glory in!*’ She  
 sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, which was about  
 a quarter past ten at night.

F I N I S.

